

MONTANA CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY CENTER

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

Policy Subject: Earthquake	
Policy Number: STP 15	Standards/Statutes: ARM 37.27.121
Effective Date: 01/01/02	Page 1 of 2

PURPOSE: To coordinate activities within the facility in the event of an earthquake.

POLICY: To provide staff and patients with a safe and coordinated plan when responding to an emergency.

An earthquake is a violent shaking or trembling of the ground caused by breakage or shifting of underground rock along lines of stress, called faults. Volcanic forces may also cause earthquakes. There is no warning when an earthquake may occur. It may range in magnitude from slight tremors to jolting "waves" of movement. The potential for earthquakes in this area is a major threat.

PROCEDURE:

I. What to do during an earthquake:

- A. Whether indoors or outdoors, stay there. Most injuries occur when people are entering or leaving buildings. Keep patients near you.
- B. Stay calm; the alarms will probably go off.
- C. If indoor, get under a desk or table; stand in a corner or doorway or against interior wall. Protect your head and face. Stay clear of windows or heavy objects that may fall or topple. Remember to drop, cover and hold
- D. If outdoors, get into an open area away from buildings, trees, walls and electrical wires and poles.
- E. Stay away from windows and outside walls. Do not use the elevators.

II. What to do after an earthquake:

- A. Be prepared for after shocks and plan where you will take cover, remember to drop, cover and

hold on.

- B. When the quake stops, reassure and calm patients. Check for any injuries to yourself and others.
- C. Do not use candles, matches, cigarettes, or any other burning material because of the danger of gas leaks. Do not use electrical switches if gas leaks are present. If fire are small use fire extinguishers to put out.
- D. Check utilities. Look for exposed wiring, broken gas lines, gas odor.
- E. Check for structural damage. If any extensive damage is noted, evacuate the building but **ONLY** when you feel it is safe to do so. Once out of building **STAY OUT**.
- F. If damage is widespread and extensive in the Silver Bow County area, an external disaster may be declared. If so, you will be notified.

III. Notify Program Administrator as soon as possible

- A. Damage from earthquakes can include:
 - B. Collapsed or severely damage buildings
 - C. Collapsed or severely damage roadways and other outside areas
 - D. Fallen utility wires
 - E. Broken gas mains
 - F. Broken water mains
 - G. Fires from disrupted utilities

IV. Injuries that could occur during an earthquake:

- A. Few injuries result directly from the movement of the earth. Falling objects and debris, fires, and actions resulting from panic cause most casualties. Be prepared to deal with:
 - B. Bone breaks and fractures
 - C. Concussions
 - D. Lacerations and abrasions
 - E. Burns
 - F. Smoke inhalation

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